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SUBJECT: LEBANON TRIBUNAL: MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE DISCUSSES
STAFFING AND FUNDING ISSUES

REF: A. USUN/IO EMAIL (WILCOX/REINEMEYER)-05/27/08

[B](#). USUN 171

[C](#). STATE 1170 (2007)

[D](#). USUN 1185 (2007)

[E](#). USUN 384

[1](#). (SBU) BEGIN SUMMARY: Robin Vincent, Registrar of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), told members of the STL Management Committee on May 22 that he is finalizing the initial budget for the STL's first year and hopes the Committee can approve it by July 11. Vincent estimated the budget would be USD 52 million, more than half of which will be devoted to costs for staff and judges, but said those figures could be reduced depending on how fast the STL fills posts. Committee members also discussed draft staff regulations for the STL, continued to consider draft financial regulations for the STL, and agreed that the Committee Chairman would inform contributors and other interested states that the Committee would brief them soon on its activities. END SUMMARY.

Initial Draft Budget Near Completion

[2](#). (SBU) STL Register Vincent briefed members on his plans for submitting the proposed budget for the STL's first financial year for the Management Committee's approval and circulated a handout providing details (ref A). Vincent said his projections reflected his "worst case scenario" and said he was working to ensure that the figures were as accurate as possible. Although Vincent did not explicitly say when the STL's financial year would begin, he predicted that the STL would begin operating on January 1, 2009.

[3](#). (SBU) Vincent estimated USD 29.9 million in costs for staff and judges, consistent with the Committee's earlier decision on staffing (refs B-D), which would form 58 percent of the draft budget. That figure is in line with comparable costs of other international tribunals, Vincent said, and reflects UNIIIC Commissioner and STL Prosecutor-Designate Daniel Bellemare's request for staffing the Office of the Prosecutor. Vincent expected that the STL would have 310 staff and judges (109 in the Office of the Prosecutor, nine in the judges' Chambers, five in the Defense Office, and 187 in the Registry). Although most of the staff of the Office of the Prosecutor will be in place when the UNIIIC's mandate expires (assuming the Security Council extends it until December 31), Vincent expected that recruitment for other posts would be delayed, depending on external events. If the STL fills posts more slowly, first-year costs would be reduced, Vincent said. Vincent also estimated that only two judges would need to work full-time during the first year. The budget also reflects USD 13.5 million for the building construction project and USD 8-9 million for operational costs, consistent with the Committee's earlier decisions on the building (ref E).

¶3. (SBU) To maximize financial flexibility, minimize costs, and ensure accuracy, Vincent asked the Committee to approve the budget in two stages. First, Vincent said he hoped the Committee would approve the initial budget by July 11. Second, after he and his advance team move to The Hague and have concrete experience to draw from, Vincent said he would reassess the budget, particularly the projected operational costs, and resubmit a revised budget for the Committee's approval by October 31. Vincent said his two-step approach aimed to avoid some of the problems experienced by other international tribunals, which initially presented low budget estimates that later had to be augmented significantly.

¶4. (SBU) USUN questioned whether Vincent's two-step process might confuse donors and make the budgeting process more cumbersome. Many Committee members welcomed Vincent's proposal as a pragmatic approach. Committee members also said they would be willing to meet with Daniel Bellemare in early June, as he has requested, so Bellemare can justify his staffing requests.

Draft Financial Regulations Near Completion

¶5. (SBU) Committee members commented on a revised draft of the financial regulations and rules for the STL, which incorporated new language from the UN Comptroller-General. A revised draft will be prepared and circulated to the Committee soon for final approval. Most of the discussion focused on language in the draft concerning audits of the STL's accounts and how best to provide for audits by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). Vincent said

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he had discussed the issue with the OIOS's chief auditor, who did not object in principle provided the STL reimbursed the OIOS for its services. The draft regulations will be revised to reflect the possibility that OIOS will provide audits.

Staff Regulations Considered

¶6. (SBU) Committee members also commented on the draft staff regulations for the STL, which the Secretariat prepared using the UN Staff Regulations and Rules as a model. USUN questioned whether a provision to allow the Management Committee to supplement or amend the regulations without prejudice to staff members' acquired rights should be amended to refer instead to "vested rights" or the principle of the prohibition of retroactivity. UN Assistant Secretary-General Larry Johnson expressed concern that departing from the language in the UN Staff Regulations and Rules might interfere with the STL's application to join the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund and said he would refer that suggestion to the UN lawyers who drafted the regulations.

¶7. (SBU) The Committee meets again on May 29.
Wolff